

86 Reported statements



1 Verb changes in reported statements

We use reported statements when we tell someone what another person has said. We usually use a past tense verb to report them:

I'm getting the 9.30 train. → *She said that she was getting the 9.30 train.*

After the past tense *said*, we usually change the tense of the person's words.

| | THE PERSON'S WORDS | | THE REPORTED STATEMENT |
|---------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|
| present simple | 'I'm really hungry.' 'I have a gun.' | past simple | <i>She said that she was really hungry.</i> <i>He said that he had a gun.</i> |
| present continuous | 'The team's playing badly.' | past continuous | <i>He said that the team was playing badly.</i> |
| can will must | 'I can do that.' 'I will use the gun.' 'You must be quiet!' | could would must/had to | <i>She said that she could do that.</i> <i>He said that he would use the gun.</i> <i>She said that we must/had to be quiet.</i> |

Some verbs do not change in reported statements: *could*, *should*, *ought to*, *would*, *might*:
'I might go shopping later.' → *She said she might go shopping later.*

2 Reporting the past simple and present perfect

After the past simple and present perfect, we often use *had* + the *-ed* (past participle) form of the verb, e.g. *had/hadn't finished*. (This is called the past perfect tense.)

| | THE PERSON'S WORDS | THE REPORTED STATEMENT |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|
| past simple | 'It snowed a lot in the winter.' | <i>They said that it had snowed a lot in the winter.</i> |
| present perfect | 'Anna hasn't arrived yet.' | <i>He said that Anna hadn't arrived yet.</i> |

3 Pronoun changes in reported statements

| | | CHANGES TO | EXAMPLES |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---|
| pronouns and possessives | <i>I</i> | <i>he/she</i> | 'I'm cold.' → <i>Dave said that he was cold.</i> |
| | <i>me</i> | <i>him/her</i> | 'They need me.' → <i>She said that they needed her.</i> |
| | <i>my</i> | <i>his/her</i> | 'That's my book.' → <i>He said that it was his book.</i> |
| | <i>ours</i> | <i>theirs</i> | 'Those seats are ours.' → <i>Alice said that those seats were theirs.</i> |

Also: *we* → *they*, *us* → *them*, *our* → *their*, *you* → *I/we*, *you* → *me/us*, *your* → *my/our*, *yours* → *mine/ours*

Practice

1 Complete the reported statements with verbs, pronouns or possessives.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 0 'I haven't got any money.' | She said that she <i>hadn't</i> got any money. |
| 1 'I work at the factory.' | He said that he at the factory. |
| 2 'We can't leave early.' | They said that they leave early. |
| 3 'The parcel hasn't arrived.' | Jane said that the parcel arrived. |
| 4 'We aren't going to stay long.' | We said that we going to stay long. |
| 5 'Jim lost his job a few weeks ago.' | She said that Jim his job a few weeks ago. |
| 6 'I'm not happy about the date.' | He said that wasn't happy about the date. |
| 7 'We can wait for you.' | They said that they could wait for |
| 8 'You've taken my coat.' | The woman said that I had taken coat. |

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Match the reported statements 1–7 in the conversation with the person's words A–H below.

EMILY Mr Fellowes, could I ask you something?
MR F Yes, of course, Emily. What is it?
EMILY Well, in my interview they said that (0) *I wouldn't have to wait long for a promotion*. I've been here for two years and I think my work has been good. When I asked you about it last month, you said that (1) *you'd think about my promotion*.
MR F I did, but then two weeks ago you said that (2) *you were thinking about leaving*. I told you that (3) *I had thought about your promotion*. I said that (4) *I didn't think you were ready*, and, anyway, I said that (5) *I couldn't make the decision alone*.
EMILY Yes, I said that (6) *I had thought about leaving*. But that's because I'm beginning to think that I don't have a future here. Did you get my email last week? In it, I said that (7) *I thought I was ready* for a more difficult job. If you can't offer me one, I'll look for one with another company.

A 'I'm thinking about leaving.' E 'You won't have to wait long for a promotion.'
B 'I can't make the decision alone.' F 'I think I'm ready ...'
C 'I'll think about your promotion.' G 'I've thought about leaving.'
D 'I don't think you're ready.' H 'I've thought about your promotion.'

3 Make the words in the pictures into reported statements.

0 The robber said that he *wanted all the money*.....
1 The assistant said that she
2 The other robber said that they
3 The assistant said that
4 The first robber said
5 The customer said

